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POINT AND PILLOW LACES

himself full justice. I should call him rather a painter of light and atmosphere, for when these are the key-notes he excels. He lays on colour with a broad, free touch, yet exempt from all garishness.

In 1891, at the age of eighteen, he exhibited for the first time in the Royal Academy. His picture, *A Ship on Fire*, was favourably noticed by the critics, and the first stepping-stone to future success was laid. Since then he has exhibited every year in the Royal Academy, for the last five years in the New Gallery, in the Institute, and the Walker Gallery. His success is not confined to his native shores alone, for the Princess of Monaco, who is a warm admirer of his work, has allotted him two places *à perpétuité* in the *Exposition des Beaux Arts* at Monte Carlo.

As a personality Bernard Gribble is both fascinating and original. He possesses a lively, restless temperament, and from his mother's side has inherited the Irish sense of humour. He rejoices in an uncommon versatility, for besides being a musician he is a first-rate mimic. He is a capital companion and a 'good fellow' in the full sense of the term. There is also another side to his character. This is best indicated by his own admission that he loves to sit during choir practice in some dim corner of the organ gallery in the great Oratory which is for him so full of the memories of the past, and there dream of the future, the future that should hold a golden store for him, for he possesses ambition, power, and originality, three attributes that should carry him far along the road to fame.

B. KENDALL.

POINT AND PILLOW PLACES, BY W. G. BOWDOIN

Interesting information concerning priceless dreams in thread. Ancient and modern achievements in needle-work. Collections of enormous value owned by Royal personages.

QUEEN VICTORIA's collection of lace is valued at something like £80,000. The Princess of Wales owns £50,000 worth of lace, and the late ex-Empress Eugénie had a splendid collection. Pope Leo XIII., however, surpasses them all, as his collection is estimated to be worth almost, if not quite, two hundred thousand pounds sterling. The ancient Court dresses and costumes, in which lace was a most important part, were often prodigal in value, and some courtiers are said to have worn laces at Court the value of which did not fall below from £60,000 to £80,000. Many portraits of Queen Elizabeth show her as wearing much lace and splendid ruffs sustained by means of golden wire, before the efficacy of starch was known and utilised. In America George Washington wore lace collars and cravats, as did also Benjamin Franklin, Robert L. Livingston, and others of their contemporaries.

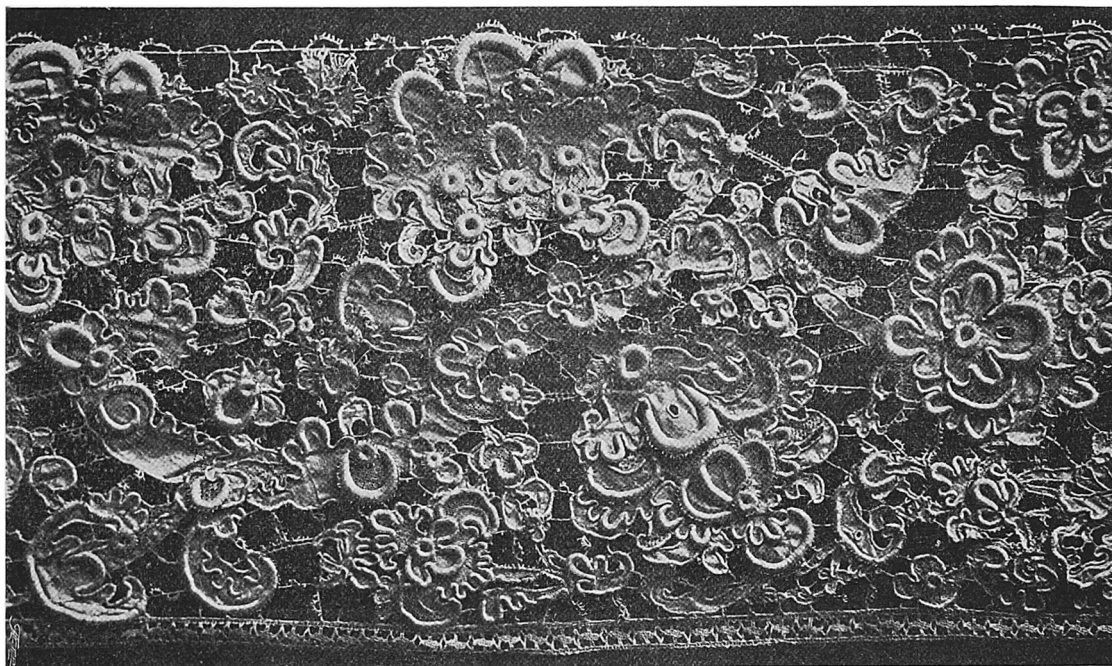
The origin of lace-making is veiled in obscurity. Contentions for the honour of the discovery and application of this art are many, and claimants are to be found in nearly all of the countries of

Western Europe. It is lamentable that the knowledge we really have on the subject is so very meagre, but in spite of research all that seems definite and chronologically positive is that the art is of very great antiquity.

When man first discovered here and there in the forests and jungles that nature had provided a network in which the beasts of the field and birds of the air were sometimes made prisoners, it is not impossible that it was then suggested to him that a similar but totally artificial construction might thus be made and that under such inspiration, out of tough grasses, running vines and twigs, rude nets were made by him, crudely constituting in such a primitive way the original ancestral lace. Lace by its adorning possibilities, as well as by its commercial value, at a very early period attracted and has since held the world's attention. We have been told that the Swiss Lake Dwellers had their lace or knotted work. So in a larger measure had the Egyptians, and recent discoveries at Coptos would seem to indicate that there, also, was lace or something akin to it, known, made and admired.

The beautiful raised points of Venice, Punto di Venezia, Punto di Spagna, Points d'Alençon, the bobbin laces of Milan and Genoa, the

POINT AND PILLOW LACES



VENETIAN POINT LACE
AT MESSRS. HOWELL & JAMES'S EXHIBITION

Guipures of Flanders and the early thread laces of England all unite in telling the same story, and the esteem of lace became almost adoration and in the sixteenth century developed into a passion, which may perhaps be likened unto the Dutch love of tulips that once similarly obtained.

Legendary traces of lace appear, as previously stated, among the ancient Swiss lake dwellers and frequently in the Orient. Some of it belongs to that indefinite period known as prehistoric times. Needle-work and lace have been, from the earliest beginnings, so mixed and intertwined that it would be impossible to enter upon the one subject without mentioning the other. Needle-work was in the earliest recorded ages the solace, pastime and occupation of queens and great ladies. Hawking was the one out-door sport that was held in high favour, but even for hawking a woman might not leave her house daily without being unpleasantly remarked upon. In those days her place was, pre-eminently, in her home, and needle-work was then most favourably regarded not only by those of high, but likewise those of low degree.

Needlework was the daily employment of the convents. Lace was made by the nuns expressly

for the service of the Church. As early as the fourteenth century it was familiarly and popularly called 'Nun's work.' This early nomenclature has survived, and even unto this day, in some quarters, ancient lace is still so styled. Monks, it appears from early manuscripts, were also sometimes commended for their dexterity in embroidery as well as for their skill as scribes and illuminators.

But while there is much to indicate the extended practice of needlework, as far back as among the early Egyptians in connection with those wonderful textiles of theirs that have come down to us, yet no absolute proof exists of extended lace-making as we now commonly understand it, prior to the late fifteenth or the early sixteenth century.

Many writers are inclined to the opinion that lace owes its origin to the difficulty of disposing of the unravelled ends of linen garments and hangings; but it is more likely that while this may and doubtless does to a very considerable extent account for the first formation of fringes with ornamental headings, which now have exemplification in various sorts of macramé, the art of lace-making was more gradual in its

ORIGIN OF LACE

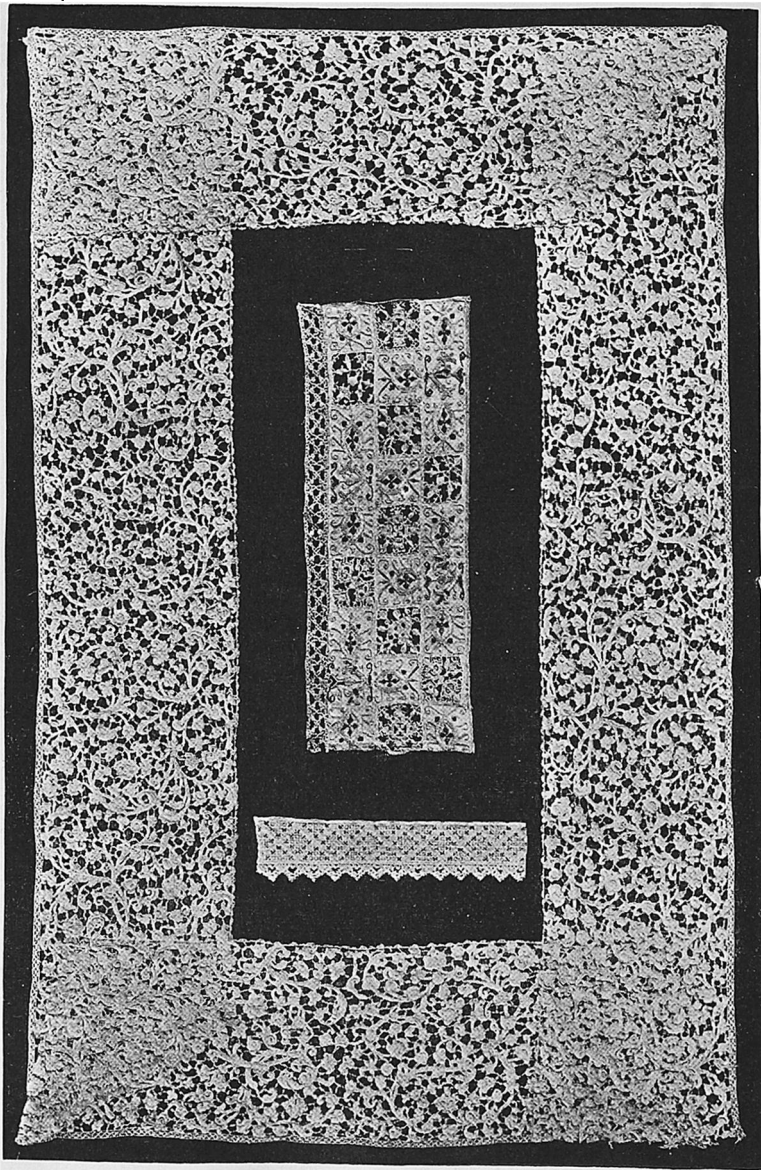
evolution. In the beginning embroidery came first, then it and lace went hand-in-hand, until finally they diverged; the line of demarcation became more and more pronounced, and finally they became as they are now, entirely separate and distinct.

For many of its earlier years lace, because of the amount of labour required in making it, was regarded as sacred to the service of religion alone, and it was not until some time after the Fourteenth Century that this idea was finally dispelled. Even then kings and queens alone had the exclusive right to use it in any quantity. Later the

nobles took up with lace, which soon became so lavishly employed that numerous cases appear on the records where financial ruin overtook those who were over-extravagant in the purchase of lace for the trimmings of cravats, ruffles, and even for the garniture of Seventeenth Century boots. Laws aimed at the suppression of such lavishness were frequently enacted during the latter part of the Seventeenth Century, but since then the wearing of lace by men has gradually ceased. Its use still lingers and is important, especially in the Roman Catholic Church, but as far as the dress of women is concerned the dictates of fashion and

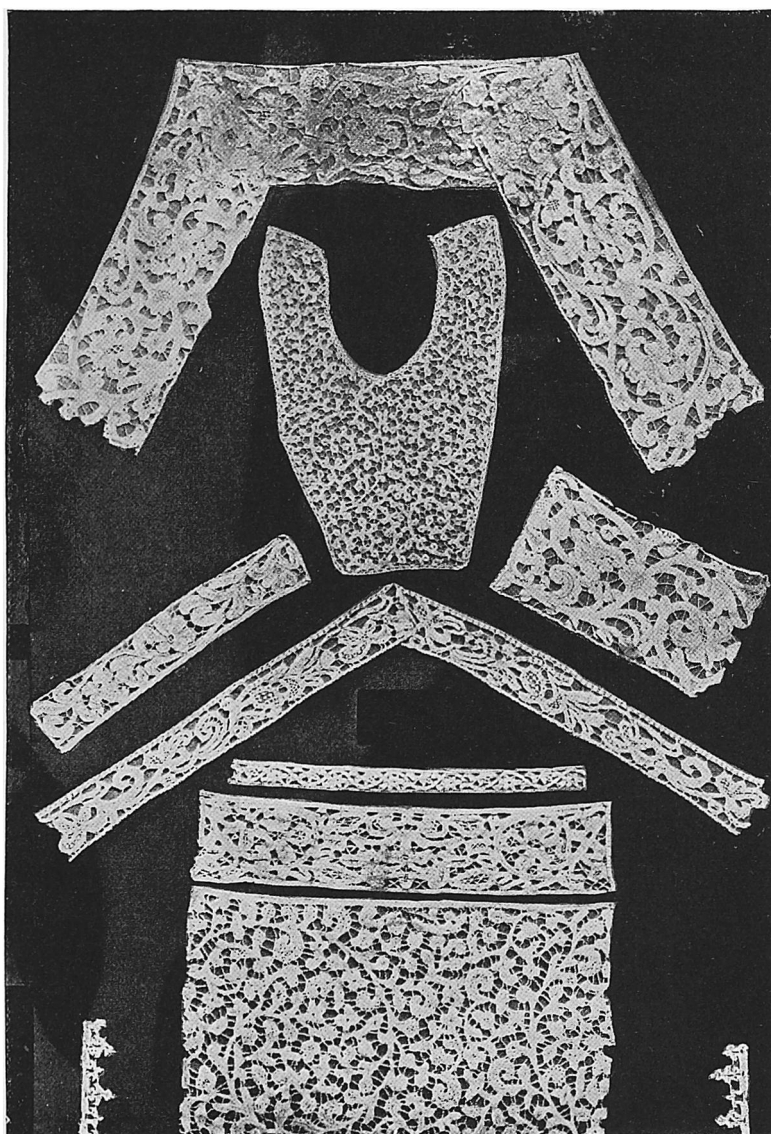
the invention of methods of making lace by machinery have cast a death-blow at the hand-made product. Some few kinds of lace will ever exist and flourish because of their well-established reputations as favourites, but the old-time popularity of lace is dead and can never be revived.

A pretty tradition exists that attributes the invention of lace and its making to Barbara Uttman, Uttmann or Uttermann, the wife of a miner in the Hartz Mountains of Saxony. There is at Green Vault, Dresden, an ivory statuette by Koehler that commemorates her in this connection. Old authorities credit her with the founding of a school for lace-making at Annaberg in 1561 and the consequent introduction of the art into Germany, where it continued to be a source of revenue to the nation until the Eighteenth Century. Modern writers on the subject are rather more inclined to credit the introduction of lace-making to the religious emigrants, who brought the knowledge and practice with them from Flanders. The



VERY HANDSOME SPECIMENS OF ITALIAN ANTIQUE LACE.

POINT AND PILLOW LACES



EXAMPLES OF ITALIAN ANTIQUE LACE
FROM THE COLLECTION OF MRS. R. L. STUART

old Flemish laces were of great beauty. The Guipures of Flanders were always held in high esteem.

The most ancient of all the works falling under the generic term of lace is nothing less than embroidery, ready references to which frequently occur in the very earliest of both sacred and profane books. Cut work, drawn work, darned netting and knotted lace, were all popular and had an extensive use in the Elizabethan age and later. Family portraits and monuments in some of the older churches furnish many interesting illustrations of these. Cut work, as the name

implies, was produced by cutting out portions of a foundation of linen in patterns and working over the edge with a button-hole stitch or else by overlaying reticulated threads stretched upon a frame and thus forming a pattern.

There are two great classes of real laces, needle point and pillow laces. These are both subdivided. Venice, in the time of her greatest prosperity, had established a reputation for her rich point laces; a fashion for which existed in most of the European countries.

The most precious lace is the result of work accomplished entirely with the needle and is for this reason called 'point,' whilst 'pillow' is the result of weaving, twisting and pleating of the various constituent threads upon a lace maker's pillow or cushion. Machine lace is, of course, a purely mechanical product and is not as interesting nor as artistic as is the hand work, although the design forms can be produced and reproduced with elaborate exactness and counterpart. Neither point nor pillow laces are textiles,

for all textiles are woven. The purpose and mission of lace is again purely decorative, which it is well to bear in mind, as otherwise there are fishing and other nets, purely utilitarian, that would have to be classed among laces.

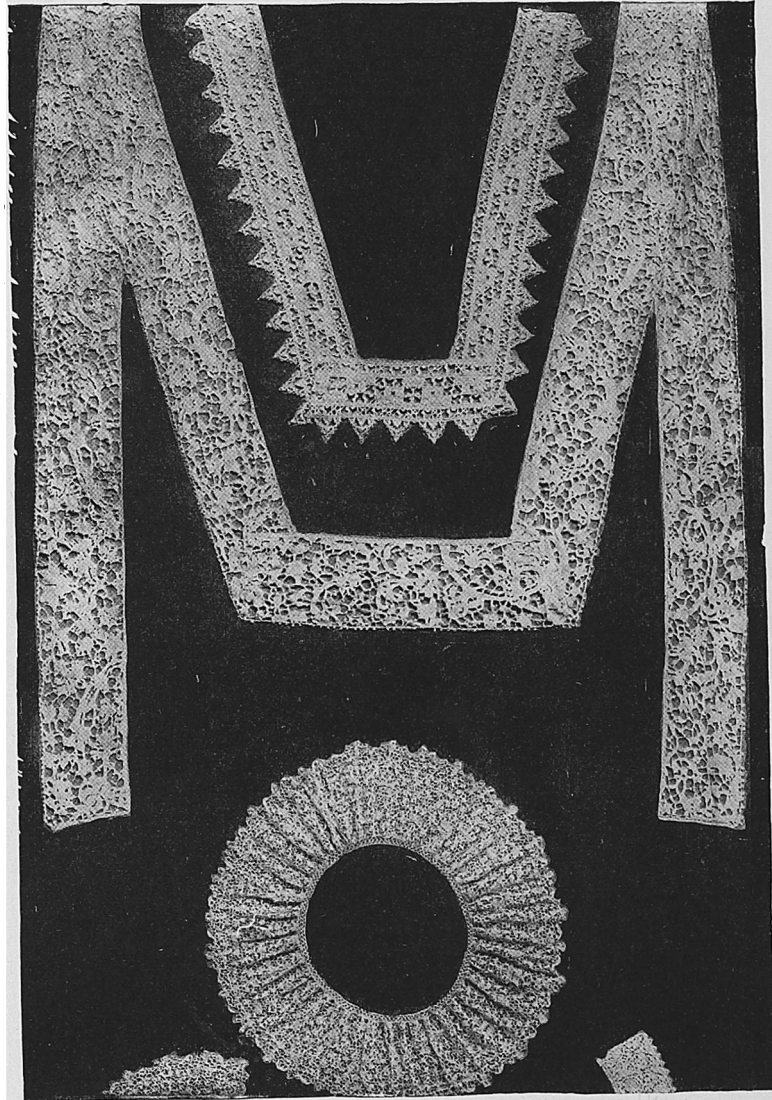
The earliest laces made in Italy were the cut work, darned laces, and drawn work. The Italians claimed the invention of point or needle-made lace, doubtless deriving the art of fine needle-work from the Greeks. However that may be, certain it is that evidences of point lace-making appeared in Italy as early as the Fifteenth Century. Spain, according to tradition, learned her lace-making of Italy, and Spanish point in its

LACE AND FOLKLORE

day has been as celebrated as that of Italy.

It is not generally known that the most eminent painters of Italy and the Low Countries, during the golden age of art, not only lent the most flattering countenance to point lace by introducing it into their finest works, but that they directed their genius to the actual production of designs for the improvement of lace manufacture. When it is understood that such masters as Michael Angelo, Raphael, Holbein, Guido and Vandyke thus patronised and assisted, in so far as they found it possible, in the promotion of the art of lace making, we of lesser light can well afford to pay such tribute as we may to the laces whose design forms came from them, the excellence and beauty of which are thus adequately explained, as is also the deterioration that has since crept in with the advent of less able designers, with which the world is unfortunately only too familiar.

Point laces are made entirely with the needle-point and with a single thread. The design is first carefully drawn upon a piece of parchment having a dark ground, after which, with a few deft stitches, the edges of the flowers and figures of the design as a foundation, are sewn with fine threads that are subsequently cut away. The design figures are then all filled in between the outline threads with close and varying stitches. The ground is then made with net-work like Burano point (which takes its name from an island in the lagoon east of Venice), the manufacture of which was revived with some success in 1872, or with purled guipure, like Venetian point. As a finality, the foundation threads, which follow the design edges, are buttonholed



SPECIMENS OF SPANISH AND OF VENETIAN ANTIQUE LACES

over with more or less elaboration to form the reliefs. The fastening threads are then cut and the finished lace is carefully detached from the parchment foundation; the different pieces comprising the desired length being delicately and skilfully sewed together.

The legendary basis of the fairy-like 'Rose point' (Punto di Rosa) is a most interesting contribution to lace-making folklore. In the days when every maiden, high or low, made lace, some more, some less, a sailor brought home to his sweetheart some treasures of the sea that he had collected when diving for precious coral. Just before sailing away soon afterward upon a long and dangerous voyage, with the expectation of being

ART CENTRES

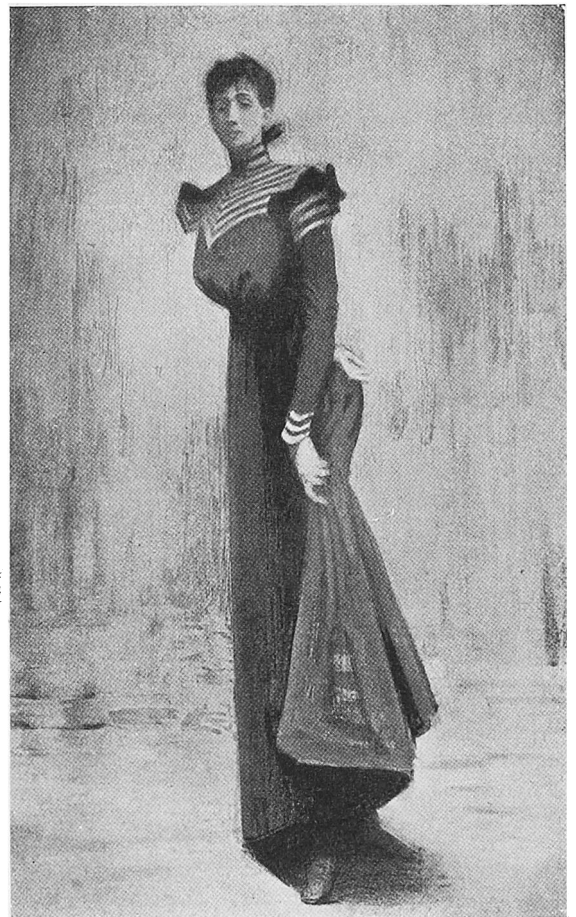
married upon his return, he urged the maiden not to spoil her eyes with useless weeping, but rather to use them in making a wedding veil of which he might be proud when he should come home. The days came and went, going into months and then years, but with inspiring love she wrought into soft, filmy lace, each loving gift of tiny shell, delicate seaweeds, and grasses, starfish and other forms, until he returned, and when the anticipated wed-

ding-day came, she was dressed in a head covering of delicate tissue of the inestimable 'Rose point' that has since adorned the persons of Queens and Princesses. Irish point is made on fine batiste by stitching a coarse thread around the design and then cutting out the ground work and filling in the open spaces, sometimes with connecting loops and knots and at other times with Punto di Aria.

(To be continued.)

ART CENTRES

LONDON.—To the long list of special exhibitions of works by 'Punch' artists at the Fine Art Society's galleries must now be added one of drawings by L. Raven-Hill. In the course of but a few years Raven-Hill has firmly established his position among the foremost of our black-and-white men, and there can be no doubt that this position owes nothing to a mere passing fashion which so often seizes upon a rising young artist, raises him rapidly to a high pinnacle of popularity, and drops him again suddenly, to let him sink into oblivion. For there is that in Mr. Raven-Hill's drawings which—quite apart from the amusement of the passing hour—commands the serious attention of the art-lover: style, technique, and rare keenness of observation. It is entirely to these qualities that he owes his success, and not to the inimitable sense of humour displayed in the legend which accompanies each sketch. Separate Du Maurier's drawings from their text, and they will hardly ever raise a smile; try the same experiment with Raven-Hill, and you will find that the humour lies in the drawing itself. More admirable even than his comic drawings are his serious illustrations and his studies from life. Lord Frederic Hamilton, the author of the preface in the Fine Art Society's catalogue, compares him to Thomas Hardy as historian of rural England, and it would indeed be hard to imagine a more complete and exact record of English rural life than that phase of Mr. Raven-Hill's work which bears on this subject.



A PORTRAIT
BY R. CHRISTIE

(From the Royal Society of British Artists)